Lucy Liu

Lucy Alexis Liu (born December 2, 1968)[1][2] is an American actress. Her accolades include winning a Critics' Choice Television Award, two Screen Actors Guild Awards and a Seoul International Drama Award, in addition to nominations for a Primetime Emmy Award.

Liu has starred as Ling Woo in the television series *Ally McBeal* (1998–2002), Alex Munday in two *Charlie's Angels* films (2000 and 2003) and Joan Watson in the crime-drama series *Elementary* (2012–2019). Her film work includes starring in *Payback* (1999), *Shanghai Noon* (2000), *Chicago* (2002), *Kill Bill: Volume 1* (2003), *Lucky Number Slevin* (2006), *Watching the Detectives* (2007), *The Man with the Iron Fists* (2012), and *Set It Up* (2018).

Liu provided voice acting for Master Viper in the *Kung Fu Panda* franchise (2008–2016) and Silvermist in the *Tinker Bell* series (2008–2014). Her other voice credits include *Maya & Miguel* (2004–2007), *Mulan II* (2004), as well as the English and Mandarin-dubbed versions of *Magic Wonderland* (2014) and *The Tale of the Princess Kaguya* (2013). Most recently, she has voiced Callisto Mal in the Disney-animated film *Strange World* (2022).

Early life

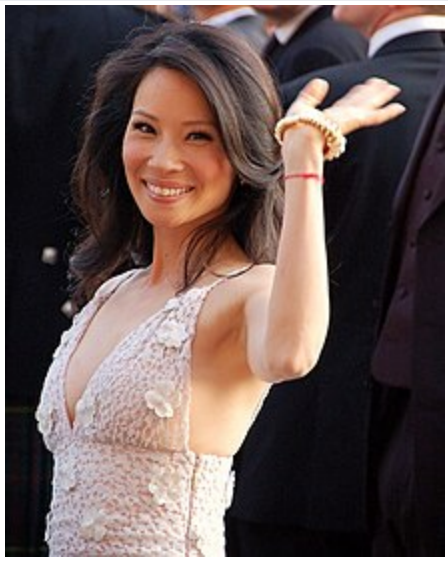
Liu as a high school senior in 1986

Liu was born in the New York City borough of Queens.[3] In high school, she adopted a middle name, Alexis.[4] She is the youngest of three children born to Cecilia, who worked as a biochemist, and Tom Liu, a trained civil engineer who sold digital clock pens.[5] Liu's parents originally came from Beijing and Shanghai and immigrated to Taiwan as adults before meeting in New York.[5][6][7] She has an older brother, John,[8][9][10][11] and an older sister, Jenny.[12] Her parents worked many jobs while Lucy and her siblings were growing up.[13]

Liu has stated that she grew up in a diverse neighborhood. She learned to speak Mandarin at home and began studying English when she was five.[14] She studied the martial art *kali-eskrima-silat*

Lucy Liu

刘玉玲



Liu at the Cannes Film Festival in 2008

Born	Lucy Alexis Liu December 2, 1968 New York City, U.S.
Education	New York University New York Studio School University of Michigan
Occupation	Actress
Years active	1990–present
Children	1

Chinese name	
Simplified Chinese	刘玉玲
Traditional Chinese	劉玉玲
Transcriptions	
Standard Mandarin	
Hanyu Pinyin	Liú Yùlíng

as a hobby when she was young.[15] Liu attended Joseph Pulitzer Middle School (I.S.145), and graduated from Stuyvesant High School.[16] She later enrolled at New York University and transferred to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she was a member of the Chi Omega sorority and studied Asian languages and cultures.[16]

Website	www.lucyliu.net (https://www.lucyliu.net/)

Career

1990s

At the age of 19, while traveling on the subway, Liu was discovered by an agent. She appeared in one commercial as a result.[17] As a member of the Basement Arts student-run theater group,[18] she auditioned in 1989 for the University of Michigan's production of *Alice in Wonderland* during her senior year of college. Although she had originally tried out for only a supporting role,[19] Liu was cast in the lead. While in line to audition for the musical *Miss Saigon* in 1990, she told *The New York Times*, "There aren't many Asian roles, and it's very difficult to get your foot in the door."[20] In May 1992, Liu made her New York stage debut in *Fairy Bones*, directed by Tina Chen.[21]

Liu had small roles in films and TV, marking her debut. In 1992, she made her big-screen debut in the Hong Kong film *Rhythm of Destiny*, which starred Danny Lee and Aaron Kwok.[22] In 1993, she appeared in an episode of *L.A. Law* as a Chinese widow giving her evidence in Mandarin.[23] Liu starred on the sitcom *Pearl*, which lasted one season. Shortly after the end of *Pearl's* run in 1997, Liu was cast in a role on *Ally McBeal*. Liu originally auditioned for the role of Nelle Porter (played by Portia de Rossi), and the character Ling Woo was later created specifically for her. Liu's part on the series was originally temporary, but high audience ratings secured Liu as a permanent cast member. Additionally, she earned a Primetime Emmy Award[24] nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series and a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Comedy Series.[19]

2000s

Liu speaking at the USAID Human Trafficking Symposium in September 2009

In 2000, Liu starred in *Charlie's Angels* along with Drew Barrymore and Cameron Diaz. In 2001, Liu was the spokeswoman for the Lee National Denim Day fundraiser, which raises money for breast cancer research and education.[25] In 2004 Liu was appointed an ambassador for U.S. Fund for UNICEF.[26] She traveled to Pakistan and Lesotho, among several other countries.[19] In 2002, Liu played Rita Foster in Vincenzo Natali's *Brainstorm*. She appeared as O-Ren Ishii in Quentin Tarantino's 2003 film, *Kill Bill*. While in negotiations for *Kill Bill* with Tarantino the two joined to help produce the Hungarian sports documentary *Freedom's Fury*.[27] She won an MTV Award for Best Movie Villain for her part in *Kill Bill*. Subsequently, Liu appeared on several episodes of *Joey* with Matt LeBlanc, who played her love interest in the *Charlie's Angels* films. She also had minor roles as Kitty Baxter in the film *Chicago* and as a psychologist opposite Keira Knightley in the thriller *Domino*. In *Lucky Number Slevin*, she played the leading love interest to Josh Hartnett. *3 Needles* was released on December 1, 2006, Liu portrayed Jin Ping, an HIV-positive Chinese woman.[28]

Liu had previously presented her artwork under a pseudonym, Yu Ling (which is her Chinese name).[5][29] Liu, who is an artist in several media, has had several gallery shows showcasing her collage, paintings, and photography.[30] She began doing collage mixed media when she was 16 years old, and became a photographer and painter.[31] Liu attended the New York Studio School for drawing, painting, and sculpture from 2004 to 2006.[32] In September 2006, Liu held an art show and donated her share of the profits to UNICEF.[31][33] She also had another show in 2008 in Munich. Her painting, "Escape", was incorporated into Montblanc's Cutting Edge Art Collection and was shown during Art Basel Miami 2008, which showed works by contemporary American artists.[32] Liu has stated that she donated her share of the profits from the NYC Milk Gallery gallery show to UNICEF.[34] In London, a portion of the proceeds from her book *Seventy Two* went to UNICEF.[26]

Early in 2006, Liu received an "Asian Excellence Award" for *Visibility*.[35] She also hosted an MTV documentary, *Traffic*, for the MTV EXIT campaign in 2007. In 2008, she produced and narrated the short film *The Road to Traffik*, about the Cambodian author and human rights advocate Somaly Mam. The film was directed by Kerry Girvin and co-produced by photographer Norman Jean Roy. This led to a partnership with producers on the documentary film *Redlight*.[36][37]

In 2007 Liu appeared in *Code Name: The Cleaner*; *Rise: Blood Hunter*, a supernatural thriller co-starring Michael Chiklis in which Liu plays an undead reporter[14] (for which she was ranked number 41 on "Top 50 Sexiest Vampires");[38] and *Watching the Detectives*, an independent romantic comedy co-starring Cillian Murphy. She made her producer debut and also starred in a remake of *Charlie Chan*, which had been planned as early as 2000.[19] In 2007 *Empire* named Liu number 96 of their "100 Sexiest Movie Stars".[39] The producers of *Dirty Sexy Money* created a role for Liu as a series regular. Liu played Nola Lyons, a powerful attorney who faced Nick George (Peter Krause).[40] Liu voiced Silvermist in *Disney Fairies* and Viper in *Kung Fu Panda*.[19]

2010s

In March 2010, Liu made her Broadway debut in the Tony Award–winning play *God of Carnage* as Annette on the second replacement cast alongside Jeff Daniels, Janet McTeer, and Dylan Baker.[41] Liu is a supporter of marriage equality for same-sex marriage, and became a spokeswoman for the Human Rights Campaign in 2011.[42] She has teamed up with Heinz to combat the widespread global health threat of iron deficiency anemia and vitamin and mineral malnutrition among infants and children in the developing world.[43]

Liu at the 2012 San Diego Comic-Con

In March 2012, she was cast as Joan Watson for *Elementary*. *Elementary* is an American Sherlock Holmes adaptation, and the role Liu was offered is traditionally played by men.[44] She has gained praise for her role as Watson, including three consecutive nominations for the People's Choice Awards for Favorite TV Crime Drama Actress. She also has played police officer Jessica Tang on *Southland*, a television show focusing on the lives of police officers and detectives in Los Angeles, as a recurring guest actor during the fourth season.[45] She received the Critics' Choice Television Award for Best Drama Guest Actress for this role.[46] Liu's other directorial credits include 6 episodes of *Elementary*, an episode of *Graceland*,[47] the episode "Dearly Beloved" of *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, and the second-season premiere of *Luke Cage*.[48]

In August 2011, Liu became a narrator for the musical group The Bullitts.[49][50] In 2013, Liu was invited to become a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.[51] Liu was named Harvard's 2016 Artist of the Year. She was awarded the Harvard Foundation's arts medal at the annual Harvard Foundation Award ceremony, during the Cultural Rhythms Festival in Sanders Theatre. She is also part of the cast in the post-apocalyptic thriller *Future World*, directed by James Franco and Bruce Thierry Cheung.[52] Her first national museum exhibition was held at the National Museum of Singapore in early 2019[53] and was titled "Unhomed Belongings."[54]

2020s

In April 2021, Liu was cast as the villainess Kalypso in the upcoming superhero film *Shazam! Fury of the Gods*.[55] In 2022, she was cast to voice a role in the Walt Disney Animation Studios film *Strange World*,[56] and in Jake Kasdan's upcoming film *Red One*.[57]

Personal life

In 1991, Liu underwent surgery after a breast cancer scare. "The doctor sort of felt and said it was cancer and it needs to come out. I went into shell-shock. It was pretty traumatizing." The lump was removed just two days after the doctor's examination and was found to be benign.[58]

Liu has studied various religions, such as Buddhism, Taoism and Jewish mysticism. She has stated, "I'm into all things spiritual—anything to do with meditation or chants or any of that stuff. I studied Chinese philosophy in school. There's something in the metaphysical that I find very fascinating."[15] She has been a member of the Chinese-American organization Committee of 100 since 2004.[59]

Liu is a single parent. She has a son, Rockwell, who was born in 2015 via gestational surrogate.[60][61] She has stated that surrogacy was the right option for her because, "I was working and I didn't know when I was going to be able to stop."[62] She was involved in Tylenol's #HowWeFamily Mother's Day Campaign, which celebrated non-traditional families.[63]

Liu has been vegetarian since childhood.[64][65]

Filmography

Film

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1992	*Rhythm of Destiny*	Donna	
1993	*Protozoa*	Ari	Short film
1995	*Bang*	Hooker	
1996	*Jerry Maguire*	Former girlfriend	as Lucy Alexis Liu
1997	*Gridlock'd*	Cee-Cee	
	City of Industry	Cathi Rose	
	Flypaper	Dot	
	Guy	Woman at newsstand	
1998	*Love Kills*	Kashi	
1999	*Payback*	Pearl	as Lucy Alexis Liu
	True Crime	Toy shop girl	
	Molly	Brenda	
	The Mating Habits of the Earthbound Human	The Female's Friend (Lydia)	
	Play It to the Bone	Lia	
2000	*Shanghai Noon*	Princess Pei Pei	
	Charlie's Angels	Alex Munday	
2001	*Hotel*	Kawika	
2002	*Ballistic: Ecks vs. Sever*	Agent Sever	
	Cypher	Rita Foster	
	Chicago	Kitty Baxter	
2003	*Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*	Alex Munday	
	Kill Bill: Volume 1	O-Ren Ishii	
2004	*Mulan II*	Mei (voice)	Direct to video
2005	*3 Needles*	Jin Ping	
	Domino	Taryn Mills	
2006	*Lucky Number Slevin*	Lindsey	
2007	*Code Name: The Cleaner*	Gina	Also executive producer
	Rise: Blood Hunter	Sadie Blake	
	Watching the Detectives	Violet	
2008	*The Year of Getting to Know Us*	Anne	

	Kung Fu Panda	Master Viper (voice)	English and Mandarin version
2009	*Tinker Bell*	Silvermist(voice)	
	Tinker Bell and the Lost Treasure		
	Redlight	Herself/Narrator	Also producer
2010	*Tinker Bell and the Great Fairy Rescue*	Silvermist (voice)	
	Nomads	Susan	
	Kung Fu Panda Holiday	Master Viper (voice)	
2011	*Detachment*	Dr. Doris Parker	
	The Trouble with Bliss	Andrea	
	Kung Fu Panda 2	Master Viper (voice)	English and Mandarin version
	Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You	Rowena	
2012	*Secret of the Wings*	Silvermist (voice)	
	The Man with the Iron Fists	Madame Blossom	
2014	*The Pirate Fairy*	Silvermist (voice)	
	Magic Wonderland	Princess Ocean (voice)	English and Mandarin version
	The Tale of the Princess Kaguya	Lady Sagami (voice)	
	Tinker Bell and the Legend of the NeverBeast	Silvermist (voice)	
2016	*Kung Fu Panda: Secrets of the Scroll*	Master Viper (voice)	Short film
	Kung Fu Panda 3		English and Mandarin version
2018	*Future World*	The Queen	
	Set It Up	Kirsten Stevens	
	Sherlock Gnomes		Special thanks
2019	*QT8: The First Eight*	Herself	Documentary[66]
2020	*Stage Mother*	Sienna	
2022	*If You Have*	Herself	Documentary[67]
	Strange World	Callisto Mal (voice)	
2023	*Shazam! Fury of the Gods*	Kalypso	Post-production
	Red One		Filming

Television

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1991	*Beverly Hills, 90210*	Courtney	Episode: "Pass, Not Pass"
1993	*L.A. Law*	Mei Lin	Episode: "Foreign Co-Respondent"
1994	*Hotel Malibu*	Co-worker	Episode: "Do Not Disturb"

	Coach	Nicole Wong	2 episodes
1995	*Home Improvement*	Woman #3	Episode: "Bachelor of the Year"
	Hercules: The Legendary Journeys	Oi-Lan	Episode: "The March to Freedom"
	ER	Mei-Sun Leow	3 episodes
1996	*Nash Bridges*	Joy Powell	Episode: "Genesis"
	The X-Files	Kim Hsin	Episode: "Hell Money" As Lucy Alexis
	High Incident	Officer Whin	2 episodes
1996–1997	*Pearl*	Amy Li	Main cast; 22 episodes
1997	*The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest*	Melana (voice)	2 episodes
	NYPD Blue	Amy Chu	Episode: "A Wrenching Experience"
	Riot	Boomer's girlfriend	TV movie (segment "Empty")
	Dellaventura	Yuling Chong	Episode: "Pilot"
	Michael Hayes	Alice Woo	Episode: "Slaves"
1998–2002	*Ally McBeal*	Ling Woo	Main cast (seasons 2–5); 72 episodes
2000	*MADtv*	Herself	Season 6, episode 6
	Saturday Night Live		Episode: "Lucy Liu/Jay-Z"
2001–2002	*Futurama*	Herself (voice)	2 episodes
2001	*Sex and the City*	Herself	Episode: "Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda"
2002	*King of the Hill*	Tid Pao Souphanousinphone (voice)	Episode: "Bad Girls, Bad Girls, Whatcha Gonna Do"
2004	*Jackie Chan Adventures*	Adult Jade Chan (voice)	Episode: "J2: Rise of the Dragons"
	Game Over	Raquel Smashenburn (voice)	6 episodes
2004–2007	*Maya & Miguel*	Maggie Lee (voice)	11 episodes
2004–2005	*Joey*	Lauren Beck	3 episodes
2005	*Clifford's Puppy Days*	Teacup, Mrs. Glen (Voices)	Episode: "Adopt-a-Pup/Jokes on You"
	The Simpsons	Madam Wu (voice)	Episode: "Goo Goo Gai Pan"
2007	*Ugly Betty*	Grace Chin	2 episodes
2008	*Cashmere Mafia*	Mia Mason	Main cast; 7 episodes
	Ben & Izzy	Yasmine (voice)	
	Little Spirit: Christmas in New York	Leo's Mom (voice)	Television film
2008–	*Dirty Sexy Money*	Nola Lyons	Main cast (season 2); 13 episodes

2009			
2009	*Afro Samurai: Resurrection*	Sio (voice)	TV movie
2010	*Kung Fu Panda Holiday*	Master Viper (voice)	
	Marry Me	Rae Carter	Miniseries; 2 episodes
2011	*Pixie Hollow Games*	Silvermist (voice)	TV movie
2011–2016	*Kung Fu Panda: Legends of Awesomeness*	Master Viper (voice)	46 episodes
2012	*Southland*	Jessica Tang	10 episodes
2012–2019	*Elementary*	Joan Watson	Main cast
2013	*Pixie Hollow Bake Off*	Silvermist (voice)	TV movie
2016	*Girls*	Detective Mosedale	Episode: "Japan"
2017	*Difficult People*	Veronica Ford	4 episodes
	Michael Jackson's Halloween	Conformity (voice)	TV special
2019	*Why Women Kill*	Simone	Lead role (season 1)[68]
2020	*The Drew Barrymore Show*	Herself	Episode: "Cameron Diaz, Lucy Liu, Adam Sandler"
2021	*Star Wars: Visions*	Bandit Leader (voice)	Short film: *The Duel*: English language dub[69]
	Scooby-Doo and Guess Who?	Herself (voice)	Episode: "The Tao of Scoob!"
	Curb Your Enthusiasm	Herself	Episode: "The Five-Foot Fence"
	Death to 2021	Snook Austin	Television special
TBA	*A Man in Full*	Joyce Newman	Upcoming miniseries

Video games

Year	Title	Role	Notes
2001	*SSX Tricky*	Elise Riggs	Voice
2003	*Charlie's Angels*	Alex Munday	
2012	*Sleeping Dogs*	Vivienne Lu	

Director

Year	Title	Notes
2011	*Meena*	Short film
2014–2019	*Elementary*	7 episodes
2015	*Graceland*	Episode: "Master of Weak Ties"
2018	*Luke Cage*	Episode: "Soul Brother #1"
2019	*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*	Episode: "Dearly Beloved"

	Why Women Kill	Episode #8: "Marriages Don't Break Up on Account of Murder - It's Just A Symptom That Something Else Is Wrong"
2020	*New Amsterdam*	Episode #33: "Hiding Behind My Smile"

Art exhibitions

Year	Title	Location	Notes
1993	*Unraveling*	As Liu Yu-ling, Cast Iron Gallery, SoHo, New York, US[70]	Collection of multimedia art pieces, photographs
2006	*Antenna*	Emotion Picture Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada[71]	Incorporating paint and drawing into photographs. Seven pieces of which two new. March 5 to June 30.
2007	—	Art Basel Miami, Casa Tua in South Beach Miami, US as part of Montblanc's Cutting Edge Art Collection[72]	Painting *Escape*, a black and white abstraction
2008	*je suis. envois-moi*	As Yu Ling, Six Friedrich Lisa Ungar, Munich, Germany[73][74][75]	Six oil paintings, four prints and ten sculptures. Revenue was donated to UNICEF. May 8 to 31
2010	—	As Yu Ling. Painting included in the Bloomsbury Auctions 20th Century Art and Editions sale in New York, US[76]	Painting
2011	*Seventy Two*	Salon Vert, London, UK[77]	Personal canvases – hand-stitched and stuck with funny little found objects, pieces of rubbish
2013	*Totem*	The Popular Institute gallery, Manchester, UK[78]	Series of work on linen, explores the fragility of the human form
2019	*Unhomed Belongings*	National Museum of Singapore[79]	First museum exhibit, included works by Shubigi Rao

Awards and nominations

Year	Award	Category	Nominated work	Result
1997	Screen Actors Guild Award	Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series	*Ally McBeal*	Nominated
1998				Won
1999	NAACP Image Award	Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series		Nominated
	Primetime Emmy Award	Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series		
	Screen Actors Guild Award	Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Comedy Series		
2000		Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series		
2001	Blockbuster Entertainment Award	Favorite Supporting Actress – Action	*Shanghai Noon*	Won
		Favorite Team	*Charlie's Angels*	
	MTV Movie Award	Best On-Screen Duo		
		Best Dressed		Nominated

	Saturn Award	Best Supporting Actress		
	Broadcast Film Critics Association Award	Best Cast		Won
2003	Phoenix Film Critics Society Award	Best Cast	*Chicago*	Nominated
	Screen Actors Guild Award	Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture		Won
	Teen Choice Award	Choice Hissy Fit		
	MTV Movie Award	Best Dance Sequence	*Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle*	Nominated
2004	Saturn Award	Best Villain	*Kill Bill: Volume 1*	Won
		Best Supporting Actress		
2011	NAACP Image Award	Outstanding Actress in a Television Movie, Mini-Series or Dramatic Special	*Marry Me*	Nominated
2012	New York Women in Film & Television Muse Award	Best Actress		Won
	Prism Awards	Female Performance in a Drama Series Multi-Episode	*Elementary*	Nominated
2013	Seoul International Drama Awards	Best Actress		
	Teen Choice Awards	Choice TV Actress: Action		Won
	Critics' Choice Television Award	Best Guest Performer in a Drama Series		
	NAACP Image Award	Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series	*Southland*	
2015				Nominated
2016	People's Choice Awards	Favorite TV Crime Drama Actress	*Elementary*	
2017				

See also

- Chinese Americans in New York City

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External links

- Official website (https://www.lucyliu.net/)
- Lucy Liu (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0005154/) at IMDb
- Lucy Liu (https://www.emmys.com/bios/lucy-liu) at Emmys.com
- Lucy Liu (https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/lucy-liu/206329468) on iTunes

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